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October 19, 2011

To the Members of the House Committee on Health Policy
P O Box 30036
Lansing, MI 48909-7536

I am writing on behalf of the Michigan Minority Health Coalition www.michigan.com (MMHC). MMHC is a statewide consortium committed to improving health outcomes for Michigan's racial and ethnic minority populations by promoting systemic change. Our coalition commends Governor Rick Snyder and Senator Marleau for the leadership role taken on SB 693. However, we believe that the following changes would strengthen the proposed legislation and improve healthcare for Michigan's residents:

- It's critical to require consumer representation on the governing board. A consumer perspective at the table during the creation process for the MIHealth Marketplace will better serve Michigan's residents.
- Strengthened SB 693 by making enrollment in Medicaid and other state-supported programs a seamless process, rather than by requiring individuals to secure coverage at multiple locations or agencies.
- Allow grass roots and neighborhood organizations to train and serve as healthcare navigators so that they can better assist their constituents. Community navigators can provide a face to face interface with clients trying to traverse the healthcare exchange system. We believe that the use of healthcare navigators will increase the efficiency of the system by helping individuals select the best coverage for their needs.

Research overwhelmingly demonstrates that individuals who have consistent access to health care services are less likely to develop serious, more costly medical conditions. We therefore support implementation of SB693 with the aforementioned changes.

Cordially,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Othelia W. Pryor", written in a cursive style.

Othelia W. Pryor, PhD
Executive Director